



*Maryanne Swanson, RN, NP*

Why did you choose psychiatric/mental health nursing?

I have a dual certification as an Adult Nurse Practitioner. After practicing for a few years in primary care I really felt I needed more knowledge in treating mental health issues that were seen in primary care, so I decided to go back for my Psych NP.

Please provide a brief description of what you do.

I work in two different settings. 1). I work in a corporation and one of my responsibilities is to provide employee assistance (EAP), and work with employees individually as well as work with human resources and management in employee mental health issues such as addiction, depression, grief etc. 2). I also am in private practice with a colleague in a Nurse Practitioner run clinic. We provide primary care and have also see patients for counseling as well as psych mental health medication management.

Please describe your role in the health care team in the region/organization/community where you practice psychiatric/mental health nursing.

Our clinic has a strong relationship with community mental health where we receive referrals from them. We also run a free clinic in Livingston County and provide primary care and previously, via a grant, mental health counseling and medication management for the uninsured.

What do you consider to be the most challenging and most rewarding parts of psychiatric/mental health nursing?

Most challenging are the people who do not have significant mental or physical issues but work the system to get on disability.

Most rewarding is when a person actively engages in counseling and is empowered to deal with their mental health issues whether it is depression, bipolar, grief or addiction and go on to lead productive lives.

What advice do you have for nursing graduates who are considering psychiatric/mental health nursing as a career?

It can be a very high burn out area. That is why I love the balance of both primary care and mental health. You need to know when and what to do to take care of yourself. You need a strong support system and it helps to have a colleague in the field to discuss issues, concerns etc.

What advice do you have for nursing graduates who are considering psychiatric/mental health nursing as a career?

I love what I do; I am very lucky to have the opportunity to serve in this capacity. I am very humbled when people entrust their health to me. I hope and pray I make a difference. I learn every day and I never want this to end.